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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PRESIDENT OBAMA'S CAIRO SPEECH, NORTH KOREA

¶1. Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused June 5 news coverage on the change in the board of directors of Formosa Petrochemical Corp. founded by the late business tycoon Wang Yung-ching; on the results of senior high school entrance exams; and on the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Tiananmen Square Protest. President Barack Obama's speech at Cairo University was reported in all four major Chinese-language and the three English-language newspapers. All the Chinese-language newspapers presented the straight news story prominently in their international sections with banner headlines and eye-catching photos, mostly half-page and above the fold. The speech received one commentary, an op-ed in the pro-unification "United Daily News," after it was delivered. The op-ed said the speech was still based on conventional American and Western values and failed to shed light on how to resolve issues in the Middle East. The speech at the most was "a hodgepodge of leftovers," the op-ed criticized. Regarding speculation on a successor for North Korea leader Kim Jong-il, a column in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" cast doubts on recent information that Kim Jong-il has chose his third son, Kim Jong-un, as his successor. The column said that if Kim Jong-il really has made this decision, he is probably muddleheaded, because his method of choosing his heir is in stark contrast the method by which his father, Kim Il-sung, selected and groomed him. End summary.

¶2. "Obama's Middle East Speech; A Hodgepodge of Leftovers"

Hsu Cheng-hsiang, a retired associate professor of the Department of Arabic Language and Literature at National Chengchi University, opined in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (6/5):

"... Judging from issues raised in the speech [delivered in Egypt by United States President Barack] Obama, it is not difficult for us to notice that the mainstream values of the Western Civilization still prevail in [the mindset of] the authors of the speech. It means that Obama's Middle East policy is still the continuation of the pursuit of conventional American and Western values and interests. In other words, in terms of how truly to resolve the Middle East's problems, [the speech] still failed to address much or dared not address it at all.

"President Obama's taking a respectful or low-profile manner (such as his bowing to Saudi Arabian king Abdullah) when he encounters Arab countries or leaders of Islamic countries would make people feel that he may well have [adopted] new conduct. However, judging from the content, the speech is really a hodgepodge of leftovers."

¶3. "Can Kim Jong-il Let a Child Succeed?"

The "International Lookout" column in the centrist, KMT-leaning "China Times" [circulation: 130,000] (6/5):

"... According to the method by which Kim Il-sung passed power on to his son, Kim Jong-il, it is impossible for Kim Jong-un to be the

heir [to Kim Jong-il]. Such a manner is not in accordance with the usual mode of how a dictator transfers power.

"In fact, the decision of Kim Il-sung let Kim Jong-il be his heir primarily followed the example of how China's Chiang Kai-shek gave power to Chiang Ching-kuo. The gesture that Chiang Kai-shek posed in the beginning was to designate Chen Cheng [Taiwan's former Vice President from 1954 to 1965] as his successor. But in reality, Chiang Kai-shek was grooming Chiang Ching-kuo in a step-by-step manner. ... During the process of grooming Kim Jong-il, Kim Il-sung always took Kim Jong-il with him to inspect military forces and attend in important political activities. That was the same manner in which hat Chiang Kai-shek was accompanied by Chiang Ching-kuo at that time.

"Whether Chiang Ching-kuo or Kim Jong-il, their status after taking over the reins was completely stable. There were absolutely no challengers [to them] and their regimes were highly stable. Chiang Ching-kuo knew that he could not let [his second son] Chiang Hsiao-wu or [his third son] Chiang Hsiao-yun succeed him. How is it possible that Kim Jong-il believes Kim Jong-un to be able to succeed his rule? Chiang Ching-kuo and Kim Jong-il are both great figures. Even if both of them have the idea of letting their next generation succeed them, they must know that 'time is not waiting for me.' It is too late, and arrangements cannot be made like this anymore.

"Maybe Kim Jong-il is muddleheaded. Instead of following his dad's conduct, he surprisingly insisted on letting a child be his heir. Then it will be the North Korean people who end up with such a bad luck."

YOUNG